

April 13, 2005

Contact: Susie Beem, Dental Health Program Coordinator, 737-5946

Free Dental Sealant Clinic Offered to Grade School Children

In an effort to improve the oral health of young children, Regence BlueShield of Idaho's Caring Foundation, in partnership with South Central District Health, the College of Southern Idaho, and community sponsor KeyBank, will provide dental sealants free of charge to students in second through sixth grade. This free clinic will be held on Saturday, April 30, from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. in the Aspen Building on the College of Southern Idaho campus.

Sealants are a simple and effective way to prevent the most common type of tooth decay in molar teeth. The chewing surfaces of molars have many deep pits and fissures (grooves) where the bacteria that cause cavities hide. These pits and fissures are hard to clean with a toothbrush. Sealants are a plastic coating that is painted on the teeth to seal the pits and fissures and prevent tooth decay.

Sealants only protect the chewing surfaces of the molars and will not prevent decay between teeth, in the front teeth, or on the roots. However, studies show that 84% of tooth decay in children occurs in the pits and fissures of permanent molars, areas best protected by sealants. Without sealants, 75% of lower first permanent molars decay by age 13. While sealants do not completely protect children from tooth decay, they significantly reduce the chances of decay.

To make an appointment for this clinic, call Susie Beem, Dental Health Program Coordinator for South Central District Health, at 737-5946.

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